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TAGS: PREL UNSC LE SY

SUBJECT: JUMBLATT PRESSES FOR QUICK ESTABLISHMENT OF HARIRI TRIBUNAL

REF: USUN 2084

Classified By: Ambassador John R. Bolton, per 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) During a meeting with Ambassador Bolton and USUN officers on November 2, Lebanese Druze leader and MP Walid Jumblatt and two aides argued that the tribunal to try those responsible for the assassination of Rafiq Hariri must be established by November 13, at which point Hizballah SYG Nasrallah has threatened to launch street protests if PM Siniora and his March 14 allies do not agree to a National Unity Government. Jumblatt suggested that establishing the tribunal -- getting the "noose" in place -- might force the SARG and its Lebanese allies to change course. If the pro-Syrian groups proceed with their plan regardless of whether the tribunal is set up, Jumblatt's aides suggested, the March 14 forces might respond with street demonstrations of their own. If Hizballah and Aoun stage a sit-in outside PM Siniora's office, March 14 would do the same outside the Presidential Palace. To do anything else and accept Hizballah's demands, Jumblatt averred, would completely paralyze the GOL.

¶2. (C) Briefing Jumblatt on the meeting between SYG Annan and P-5 Ambassadors on November 1 (reftel), Ambassador Bolton said that every delegation except Russia agreed that we should move forward quickly to establish the tribunal. Noting Russian objections to the tribunal's scope of jurisdiction and to the selection process for judges, he cautioned that it might be difficult to secure P-5 agreement on the draft within one week. Acknowledging Jumblatt's fears about the campaign against the GOL, however, Ambassador Bolton agreed that we could seek one more P-5 meeting on November 3 to try to reach closure with the Russians and then urge the Secretariat to close discussion on the text if no agreement has been reached. At that point, the P-3 could inform the Russians of their intention to introduce a UNSC resolution authorizing the SYG to sign the tribunal agreement. Assuring Jumblatt that the Russians would not veto such a resolution, Ambassador Bolton predicted Moscow would probably abstain but might even decide to vote in favor of the tribunal. In order to increase pressure on the Russians, the Ambassador urged Jumblatt to say publicly that all members of the UNSC are working as quickly as possible to establish the tribunal.

¶3. (C) Turning to implementation of UNSCR 1701, Ambassador Bolton urged the GOL to make public reports of Syrian and Iranian violations of the arms embargo. Recalling Nasrallah's public comments that Hizballah had increased its store of weapons since the cessation of hostilities, Jumblatt said he expected that such arms violations had occurred, but he had no specific evidence either way. Nevertheless, he agreed that GOL officials would need to "show more guts" in publicizing such reports if they do exist. Jumblatt's aide raised the issue of Israeli overflights, arguing that the GOI

could collect the same information through UNIFIL aerial surveillance or from USG satellite imagery. Asked by Ambassador Bolton when it would be possible to raise the issue of disarming Hizballah, Jumblatt said that task goes beyond Lebanon's borders. The only way to disarm Hizballah is to change the regime in Damascus so that it no longer serves as an ideological link between Hizballah and Iran. To accomplish this goal, Jumblatt argued, the USG should engage "real" Syrian opposition groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood.

BOLTON